

A SYNOPSIS OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

AMERICAN MUSLIMS FOR PALESTINE
EMPOWERMENT through
EDUCATION and **ACTION**

For centuries, Palestinians and Jews lived together peacefully. In the 19th century, the land of Palestine was inhabited by a multicultural population – approximately 86 percent Muslim, 10 percent Christian, and 4 percent Jewish – all living in peace.

ZIONISM

In the late 1800s, a group in Europe decided to colonize this land. Known as Zionists, they represented an extremist minority of the Jewish population. Their goal was to create a Jewish homeland, and they considered locations in Africa and the Americas before settling on Palestine.

At first, this immigration created no problems. However, as more and more Zionists immigrated to Palestine – many with the express wish of seizing the land for a Jewish state – the indigenous population became increasingly alarmed. Eventually, fighting broke out in escalating waves of violence. Hitler's rise to power, coupled with Zionist activities to sabotage efforts to place Jewish refugees in Western countries, led to increased Jewish immigration to Palestine, and the conflict mounted.

UNITED NATIONS PARTITION PLAN

Finally in 1947, the United Nations decided to intervene. However, rather than adhering to the principle of self-determination, according to which the inhabitants of an area create their own state and system of government, the UN chose to revert to the medieval strategy of allowing an outside power to divide up other people's land.

Under considerable Zionist pressure, the UN recommended appointing 55 percent of Palestine for a Jewish state – despite the fact that Jews represented only about 30 percent of the total population, and owned less than 7 percent of the land.

1947-1949 WAR

It is widely reported the resulting war included five Arab armies. In reality, Zionist forces outnumbered all Arab and Palestinian troops combined – often by a factor of three-to-two. Moreover, Arab armies did not invade Israel – virtually all battles were fought on land within the redrawn Palestinian state.

Finally, it is significant to note that Arab armies entered the conflict only after Zionist forces had committed 16 massacres, including the grisly massacre of more than 100 men, women, and children in Deir Yassin. Future Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, head of one of the Jewish terrorist groups, described this as “splendid,” and stated, “As in Deir Yassin, so everywhere, we will attack and smite the enemy. God, Thou has chosen us for conquest.” Zionist forces carried out 33 massacres altogether.



By the end of the war, Israel had conquered 78 percent of Palestine; three-quarters of a million Palestinians had been made refugees, and more than 500 towns and villages had been obliterated. A new map was drawn, and every city, river and hillock received a new, Hebrew name. For decades, Israel denied the existence of the Palestinian population. Former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir once said, “There is no such thing as a Palestinian.”

1967 WAR & USS LIBERTY

In 1967, Israel captured even more land. Following the Six Day War, during which Israeli forces launched a highly successful surprise attack on Egypt, Israel occupied the final 22 percent of Palestine that had eluded it in 1948 – the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since according to international law it is inadmissible to acquire territory by war, these lands are considered occupied territories and do not belong to Israel. It also settled parts of Egypt (since returned) and Syria (which remain under occupation).

Also, during the Six Day War, Israel attacked a US Navy ship, the USS Liberty, killing and injuring more than 200 American servicemen. President Lyndon Johnson recalled rescue flights, saying he did not want to “embarrass an ally.” In 2004, a high-level commission chaired by Admiral Thomas Moorer, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, found this attack to be “an act of war against the United States,” a fact scarcely reported by the media.

CURRENT CONFLICT

There are two primary issues at the core of this continuing conflict. First, there is the destabilizing effect of trying to maintain a state where rights are afforded based upon one's religion, particularly when it is largely of foreign origin. The original population of current day Israel was 96 percent Muslim and Christian, yet these refugees are prohibited from returning to their homes in the self-described Jewish state, and those within Israel are subjected to systematic discrimination.

Second, Israel's continued military occupation, confiscation of privately owned land in the West Bank, and control over

Gaza, are extremely oppressive, with Palestinians having minimal control over their lives. More than 10,000 Palestinian men, women, and children are held in Israeli prisons. Few of them have had a legitimate trial; physical abuse and torture are frequent. Palestinian borders, even internal ones, are

controlled by Israeli forces. Periodically, men, women, and children are strip-searched; people are beaten; women in labor are prevented from reaching hospitals (at times resulting in death); food and medicine are blocked from entering Gaza, producing an escalating humanitarian crisis. Israeli forces invade almost daily, injuring, kidnapping, and sometimes killing inhabitants.



According to the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords, these territories should have become a Palestinian state. However, after years of Israel continuously seizing land and conditions steadily worsening, the Palestinian population rebelled. This uprising, called the *Intifada* (Arabic for “shaking off”) began at the end of September 2000.

US INVOLVEMENT

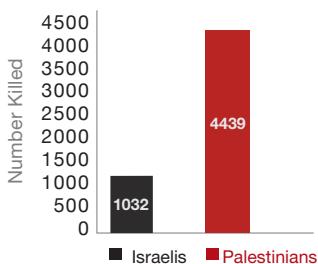
Largely due to special-interest lobbying, U.S. taxpayers bolster Israel with an average of \$7 million per day. Since its creation, the U.S. has given more money to Israel than to any other nation. As Americans uncover how Israel is using their tax dollars, many are calling for an end to this egregious expenditure.

TOLL OF THE CONFLICT

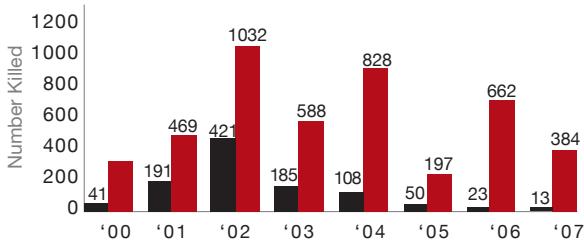
Israelis & Palestinians Killed: September 29, 2000 (beginning of most recent uprising) through December 31, 2007

ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS KILLED

EVERYONE KILLED



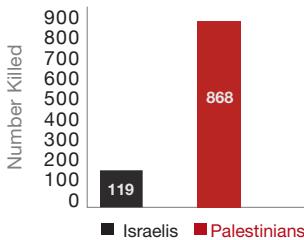
EVERYONE KILLED, BY YEAR



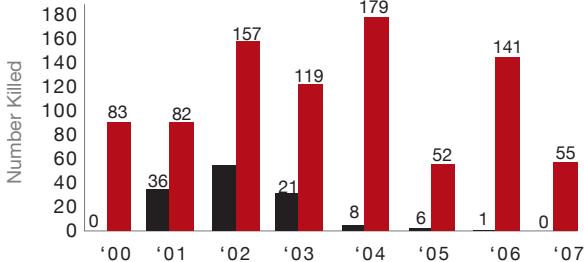
4,439 Palestinians have been killed by Israelis.
1,032 Israelis have been killed by Palestinians.

CHILDREN KILLED

EVERYONE KILLED, BY YEAR



CHILDREN KILLED, BY YEAR

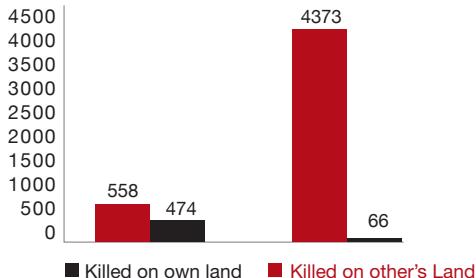


868 (or 20%) of the Palestinians killed by Israelis have been children

119 (or 12%) of the Israelis killed by Palestinians have been children.

More than **80** Palestinian children were killed before the first Israeli child was killed.

KILLED ON OWN LAND VS. KILLED ON OTHER'S LAND

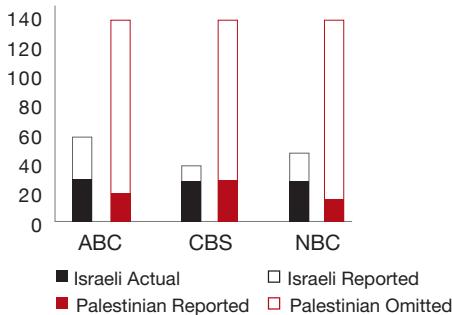


54% of the Israelis killed have been either soldiers or were killed in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel.

99% of Palestinians were killed on Palestinian land.

DISTORTED NEWS COVERAGE OF CHILDREN'S DEATHS

Reporting of Children's Deaths: Repetition vs. Omission 9/29/2000 to 9/28/2001



Repeated coverage of Israeli children's deaths creates an impression of a higher number than actually took place, while omissions of most Palestinian children's deaths does the opposite.

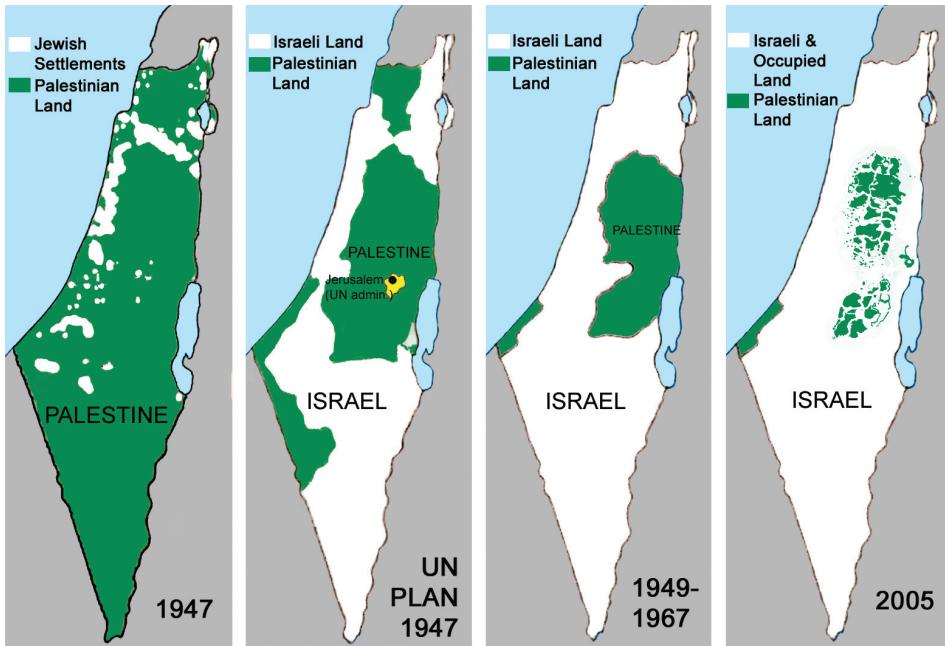
Note: The current uprising began 9/29/2000, so the data from 2000 covers only 3 months.

Death Statistics Source: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.

- B'Tselem (btselem.org)

Media Statistics Source: If Americans Knew, "Off the Charts" (ifamericanasknew.org/media)

PALESTINIAN LOSS OF LAND 1947 TO 2005



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